



CITY OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

*Office of the Mayor*

Thomas M. Menino

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 13, 2002

**Contact:** Jessica Shumaker

617.918.4446

## **Mayor Menino Urges Business Leaders to Volunteer for Boston's Earned Income Tax Credit Campaign**

The City of Boston's Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) campaign is gearing up for another tax season and needs volunteers to assist in various aspects of the campaign. The EITC is a tax credit available to many low-income families and individuals who worked during the tax year. The EITC brings more people out of poverty than any other federal program, including welfare. Compared to other local federal programs, EITC is 8 times the size of the Workforce Investment Act and more than 10 times the size of Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). Low-income families can qualify for up to \$4,700 or more in federal and state money, but most people are unaware of the EITC and therefore don't apply for it. Almost 40,000 claims were processed last year, refunding more than \$58 million to Boston households. It is estimated that an additional 13,000 eligible households did not file taxes and as a result were not able to access the EITC.

"I strongly urge Boston's business leaders to donate their time and skills by volunteering for the EITC campaign. Thousands of Boston residents need our help and with as little as three or four hours a week, volunteers can put more money in the pockets of hard working people. And in today's tough economy, that money could help pay bills, buy food, or help a family invest in education," said Mayor Thomas M. Menino.

The Boston EITC campaign is a collaboration of city, state and federal government organizations, regulators, foundations, non-profits and community-based organizations, as well as the business community. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) provides free software and training materials to the volunteer sites. Together, the campaign and the IRS provide training to site staff and volunteers.

Volunteers are needed to help the campaign with the following tasks:

- **Data Entry:** Aid in data collection at the neighborhood sites. Enter data as needed.

- **Tax Preparation:** Prepare tax returns for clients at a neighborhood tax site. Tax preparers will receive free basic tax law and software training.
- **Intake Assessment:** Greet taxpayers at a neighborhood tax site and provide basic financial literacy information. Assist taxpayers in organizing required paperwork before they see a tax preparer. Intake assessors will receive free training.
- **Financial Counseling:** Provide instruction in financial literacy classes organized at community tax sites. Free training in financial literacy will be provided.
- **Information Technology:** Computer-savvy individuals can help tax preparation sites to troubleshoot any IT problems that arise.
- **Outreach:** Help with outreach in neighborhoods throughout the City of Boston to get the word out about the EITC and the campaign's free tax preparation sites.

Volunteers can expect to spend about eight hours in training sessions that will take place in January. Between January 25 and April 15 each volunteer should be prepared to dedicate 3 or 4 hours per week at a particular tax preparation site. Volunteers can select any of 15 tax preparation sites located across the City of Boston. Volunteers will put more than \$1.5 million dollars back into the pockets of Bostonians this tax season.

For more information, log onto [www.cityofboston.gov/bra/eitc](http://www.cityofboston.gov/bra/eitc) or contact Mimi Turchinetz at 617.918.5259.

###